

Appendix

The Journey Home: Violence, Anchoring, and Refugee Decisions to Return¹

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¹ This project was reviewed and approved by the University of Arizona Human Subjects Committee under IRB protocol 1612089212.

Appendix A: Sampling Population and Survey Administration

On 6 May 2015, UNHCR in Lebanon suspended all new registrations of Syrian refugees per the instruction of the Lebanese government. As a result, many individuals who were waiting to be registered were never formally counted by the UNHCR, nor were individuals arriving in the country after this date. According to the official statistics of the UNHCR, the number of Syrian refugees registered prior to this date was more than 1.2 million, of whom 52% were female and 48% were male, with more than half (54%) of the refugee population under the age of 18.

The registered refugees were distributed throughout Lebanon—with 30% living in unofficial settlements (camps, squatted buildings, etc.) and 70% outside of such settlements. The refugees registered in Lebanon came from all regions of Syria.

Between June 4, 2018 and July 21, 2018, 2000 Syrian refugees were surveyed. Surveys were administered by *Miners for Study and Research*, which is a trusted public opinion and research firm with more than ten years of experience in Lebanon. The company has worked extensively over the years with US scholars on issues related to Lebanon, and more recently with local and international agencies, including Mercy Corps, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) on surveying Syrian refugees in Lebanon. They have also carried out, and are currently working on, projects for the Public Health Department at the American University of Beirut.

All field interviewers, team leaders, and supervisors at *Miners for Study and Research* are CITI certified in Human Subjects Research. Each survey participant was informed of the nature of the survey and their protected confidentiality. They were told that the results of the survey will be used for research only.

Each participant was given information about our research and the consent form was given to them in Arabic. They were informed that participation in the survey was entirely anonymous. Accordingly, no identifying information was recorded. Participants were informed that they, at any time, could decide not to finish the survey. Participants took the survey immediately after they gave their consent orally. If the person was unwilling to participate, the surveyor moved to the next household. The survey was administered in *Arabic* utilizing tablets. Each team included both male and female enumerators in case women were uncomfortable talking to a male enumerator. On average, the survey took approximately *30 minutes* to complete and the *rejection rate* was *16%*.

The survey firm also obtained permission from the local municipality of every town/village it went into to conduct the survey. Given that they have been doing surveys for local and international organizations for some time, their presence to conduct surveys was not unusual. Co-PI Ghosn was in daily contact with the project manager during the administration of the survey.

Sampling Strategy

Our goal was to try to ensure, as far as possible, that the distribution of our survey responses reflected the geographic distribution of the refugee population more generally. Lebanon is administratively

subdivided into 8 governorates, which are further subdivided into a total of 24 districts across the country.

First, we grouped the 8 governorates into four contiguous governorate-pairs and used the known distribution of refugees in these governorate-pairs to determine proportionally representative survey distribution per governorate-pair. In **Table 1**, we present the distribution of the survey sampling population by governorate-pair. The distribution of this population across four sets of governorates, which is listed as “percentage” in the Table, is based upon the known distribution of the 1,001,591 refugees on formal registration lists at the time of our survey deployment in Summer 2018. This percentage was then used to determine our target number of surveys to be completed in each region as a share of the total of 2,000 surveys.

Table 1: Distribution of Survey Sampling Population by Governorate

Governorates	Refugee Population	Percentage	Surveys
North & Akkar	253872	25%	503
Beirut & Mount Lebanon	270608	27%	545
South & Nabitieh	119808	12%	232
Beqaa & Baalbek-Hermel	357303	36%	720
Total	1001591	100%	2000²

Second, we distributed the governorate-pair quota across districts, such that the number of surveys conducted per district would be proportional to the size of the refugee population in each district, as determined by the UNHCR. **Table 2** shows the refugee population by district, according to UNHCR data, and the targeted number of surveys we deployed per district which is proportional to this population.

Third, we selected towns or settlements within each district such that their probability of being selected was proportional to the size of the refugee population in each town in our settlement. Because all refugees must register with municipalities, the survey firm was able to obtain a household listing for each town. Typically, Syrian refugee households were clustered within a town. In addition, they tended to be renting/living in older homes and apartments that were rundown and cheap.

Within each town, we used systematic sampling to select households: The starting household in each town or settlement was randomly selected from the household listing until an adult respondent who was willing to participate was found (only one individual per household was selected). The enumerator team then skipped three houses to go to the fifth house to request their next participant. This process continued until options in a specific town were exhausted or the required number of surveys were completed. The same method was applied in unofficial settlements: after the first tent was chosen enumerators skipped the next three to choose the fifth.

² There were some glitches with Kobo for some 200 observations, and we decided to drop them for the analysis (final data set was 1751 participants). Data was also collected from 606 further individuals as part of a trial run, however the survey instrument and process were updated and so these were removed from the final dataset.

Table 2: Distribution of Surveys by Districts

Districts	Refugee Population	Number of Surveys
Beirut	21502	40
Baalbek-Hermel	123,996	240
Rachaiya	9038	20
West Beqaa	61759	120
Zahleh	162510	340
Aaley	55801	120
Baabda	81324	160
Chouf	50097	100
Jbeil (Byblos)	6151	15
Keserwan	14140	30
Matn	41593	80
Aakar	104002	210
Batroun	12951	20
Bcharreh	2380	3
Koura	15950	30
Minieh-Danniyeh	58601	120
Tripoli	45006	90
Zgharta	14982	30
Bent Jbayl	7605	15
Hasbaiya	5541	6
Jezzine	2895	6
Marjaayoun	7780	15
Nabatiyeh	24101	50
Saida (Sidon)	44462	90
Tyr (Sour)	27424	50
Total	1001591	2000

Appendix B: Ethical Challenges & Decisions

Conducting research with vulnerable populations in fragile environments is complex and requires ethical and moral measures to safeguard participants, researchers, and the integrity of the study (Palmer 2008). Many studies have documented the ethical challenges and dilemmas faced by researchers working with vulnerable populations in fragile and violent situations (e.g., Campbell 2017; Cronin-Furman and Lake 2018; Dauphinée 2007; Fuji 2012; Ghosn and Parkinson 2019; Jacobsen and Landau 2003; Knott 2019; Lake and Parkinson 2017; Masterson and Mourad 2019; Parkinson and Wood 2015; Schwedler 2014; Wood 2006, to name a few). These studies, and many others, guided the decisions made by our team, which included a Lebanese co-PI (Ghosn) whose approach to research participants was shaped by her own status as a former IDP who had been medically diagnosed and treated for PTSD in her past.

We divide our discussion of the ethical challenges and concerns that we have faced and the decisions we have taken through the course of our project from start to finish; from our decision to apply for a United States Department of Defense (DoD) grant (through the Minerva Research Initiative)³, our research design, the execution of the research in the field, and secure management of our data subsequently.

Applying for a DoD Grant

As scholars we strive to shed light on complex problems. We are motivated by a desire to build bridges between academics and policy makers in the hopes of influencing public policy debates. Within public policy, there has long been a dearth of discussion of refugees having agency over their decisions. In the Global North, many policy makers assume that refugees have uniform preferences, and therefore are regarded as merely “recipients” of policy (Palmer 2008: 20). When the call for proposals was issued through the Minerva Research Initiative in 2016, with one of the topics focusing on issues of mobility and migration, we decided to apply given our interest in giving a platform to the “recipients” of migration policies.

Ever since the “War on Terror,” several issues and complications have arisen for scholars and researchers working on/in the Middle East (Parkinson 2014). For example, the Supreme Court decision in *Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project* in 2010 made it illegal for U.S. citizens and organizations to provide material support—including advice, assistance or services, even those intended to promote nonviolence and peace—to any individuals/groups designated as terrorists (Schwartz 2010). Given these issues and the fact that co-PI Ghosn’s immediate family lives in Lebanon and she travels back to Lebanon twice a year, the team agreed to apply only to government grants not involving work with confidential information and to not propose any topic involving sensitive issues/information that would endanger the participants, co-PI Ghosn, or her family in Lebanon. Second, given the history of U.S. intelligence agencies and military in the region, and the worry among civilians in the Middle East of potential “spies,” the team was upfront about the source of the grant to all potential participants (i.e., it was in the consent protocol) as well as to the research firm working in the field to collect survey responses, and to colleagues in Lebanon in order

³ Minerva Research Initiative supports social science research with the aim of improving the DoD’s understanding of security, broadly defined (see minerva.defense.gov).

to promote confidence and transparency in the research process as well as local colleagues' ability to evaluate their own ethical stance and safety in terms of the funder.⁴

Research Design

Our broader Minerva-funded research project examined why individuals flee conflict zones, how they determine which route to take, the nature of their experiences in the destination countries in which they settle, and the decisions they might consider regarding the potential to return to their countries of origin. At the heart of our research project was a desire to gain a better understanding of these dynamics from the perspective of the individuals themselves. To do this, we employed deep case analyses and surveys of former displaced persons from the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) and Syrian refugees in Lebanon as a result of the Syrian Civil War (2011 to present). While co-PI Ghosn's background and connections played a role in the choice of Lebanon as a case study, there were also unique advantages to choosing Lebanon as the site for fieldwork. Former forced migrants from the Lebanese civil war can reflect upon the drivers of individual migration decisions in the context of broader societal dynamics. This population also allows us to compare those that made the decision to flee and those that stayed in their homes, thereby avoiding "mobility bias" (Schewel 2019). Current Syrian refugees in Lebanon provide crucial insight into past and potential future decision-making about mobility.

Below we focus on our 2018 Syrian refugee survey (see **Appendix A** for sampling and administration strategy of the survey), which is central to the present paper. First and foremost, the team's priority was *doing no harm* (The Belmont Report 1978, Wood 2006; Fuji 2012). As a result, several factors grounded the decisions made by the team, which will be divided into the following sub-sections for discussion: 1) participant safety, confidentiality, and informed consent; and 2) sensitivity of particular issues and re-traumatization (see Masterson and Mourad 2019 for a discussion on the variety of issues to consider when surveying refugees).

Participant Safety, Confidentiality & Informed Consent

Ensuring the safety and dignity of vulnerable populations should be at the forefront of every study. Around the world, forced migrants face numerous vulnerabilities, be they economic, political or legal challenges. Refugees contributing evidence to research projects need to trust that their responses will remain confidential and will not be used to target them.

When selecting a survey firm to deploy our survey in the field, Co-PI Ghosn reached out to scholars who had done survey work in Lebanon to get feedback on the survey firms that were used. She then reached out to local researchers and colleagues in Lebanon to see the reputation of the firms that had been suggested.

It was important that the selected firm had a history of working with the variety of organizations that served vulnerable communities in Lebanon and that its team members had Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Certificates. CITI training ensures that enumerators are aware of the importance to obtaining informed consent and understand appropriate manners in which to

⁴ Co-PI Ghosn informed enumerators that if they found themselves in a situation where such information would endanger them, they needed to abort the surveys. Fortunately, this did not occur but given the political dynamics in Lebanon during the time period of the research it was a legitimate concern.

acquire consent. They must be able to discuss the goals of the project, the procedures, as well as the risks and benefits. They needed to assure the participants that they could terminate their participation at any time and skip any questions with which they were not comfortable.

Typically, Institutional Review Boards (IRB) require participants sign informed consent. However, requests to sign legal documents in the Middle East hold different significance than in North America and much of Europe. This reality is especially noteworthy when dealing with vulnerable populations. Most populations in the Middle East do not trust their governments (Kayyali 2020) and are worried that any documents that may have their names or signatures will be confiscated by government/security officials and potentially endanger them. It is common practice by many researchers in the Middle East to obtain oral consent, forego recording, and utilize pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants (see Parkinson 2013, footnote 4). As a result, when the participants gave their oral consent, the “agree to continue” button on the tablet used to record survey responses was pressed. When respondents refused to continue, the process was terminated (there was a 16% rejection rate).

The informed consent also included information about co-PI Ghosn. Participants were given her name, address and work phone number along with the home institution IRB office’s information. On many occasions, participants recognized the last name of the co-PI as being Lebanese, and the enumerators confirmed her identity. While information from a series of focus groups completed in Summer 2018 are not included in this paper, co-PI Ghosn did divulge not only her background, but also the fact that she was internally displaced as a child with her family during the Lebanese civil war.

Sensitivity of Particular Issues & Re-traumatization

Underlying our approach from the start was a desire to pay attention to local social and cultural contexts in the areas in which our research was being conducted. As a result, several specific decisions were taken to ensure the safety of the participants and the quality of the data.

First and foremost, we were careful about the language we used in order to not prime participants and to ensure that we were utilizing appropriate colloquial terminologies. Questions were translated in duplicate, separately by Ghosn and the director of the survey firm and then compared. Ghosn and the director ended up discussing a handful of words where there was a discrepancy in order to ensure the correct colloquial word was utilized. The translations were also checked against those of a certified Arabic native speaker, which was mandated by the funding agency.

Second, recognizing the history of repression in Syria and the prevalence of *mukhabarat* (Syrian intelligence) in Lebanon, there were a handful of topics that we decided we would not include in our survey. For instance, we did not ask who the refugees supported in Syria (i.e., government or opposition/rebels), and whether they participated in any political activity or perpetrated any violence before coming to Lebanon. In addition, when asked about future political scenarios, we utilized list experiments, which allow participants to indicate how many statements they agreed with while not requiring them to report which ones they agreed with directly.⁵

Third, as Jacobson and Landau (2003) maintain researchers working on humanitarian or forced migration issues find themselves in a “dual imperative: [the need] to satisfy the demands of academic

⁵ None of these list experiments/questions were utilized in our current paper.

peers and to ensure that the knowledge of understanding work generates are used to protect refugees and influence institutions like the government and the UN” (p. 186). They go on to caution researchers from falling into the ‘advocacy research’ tendency, whereby “researchers already know what they want to see and say and come away from the research having ‘proved’ it” (p. 187). One of the solutions Jacobson and Landau (2003: 194) put forward, is to ensure that the researchers pay attention to the ‘missing control group.’ Given that one of the main elements of our research project was to better understand why individuals choose to flee conflict zones, it was essential that we include refugees’ experiences, including exposure to violence.

However, when working with vulnerable populations in fragile and violent contexts, re-traumatization is always a concern. Re-traumatization can happen to anyone who has experienced a traumatic event and can arise even if they have not been prompted to think about it (Seedat et al 2004). While the prevalence of clinically-defined PTSD and depression experienced by refugee populations around the world have varied, two studies of Syrian refugees living in camps in Lebanon found that the prevalence of PTSD and depression were 27.2% (Kazour et al 2017)⁶ and 43.9% (Naja et al 2016), respectively. Therefore, given that our interest is on forced migration it becomes pertinent that we take as many precautions as possible to prevent re-traumatization. This included *avoiding extensive interviews* and *identifying potential triggers* early on to mitigate their effect.

To avoid extensive interviews, we limited our survey to thirty minutes. We also kept the question about experience of violence short and direct so that the respondents did not have to spend too much time reflecting on their experiences. In addition, we did not ask any open-ended questions for we expect that asking respondents short and precise questions should minimize the probability of undue distress caused by recalling experiences (Ellsberg and Heise 2002).

We did not make any assumptions about refugees’ experiences, but we wanted to be careful and ensure that they had options and agency. As trauma experts recommend,⁷ it is important that those exposed to trauma feel that they are in control over whether or not to share their experiences. In order to minimize undue distress and/or triggers, we assured participants that they could refuse to answer any question and that they could also terminate their participation at any time. When it came to questions about their exposure to violence, participants’ control of the tablets meant that they were able to read the questions themselves (the literacy rate in pre-war Syria was 81%; if a participant was unable to read they could request the enumerator read the questions for them) and decide whether or not to answer the question. If they indicated that they had been exposed to violence, a single checklist appeared and they were able to check all of the types of violence they faced at one time rather than encountering multiple questions that asked them explicitly to recall violence (see **Appendix C: Survey Questions**). Enumerators were notified that if any participants seemed distressed, they were to stop the survey immediately. However, none of the participants stopped the survey midway and we had no reports of distressed participants.

⁶ While the study found a PTSD point prevalence of 27.2%, the lifetime prevalence of PTSD in their sample of adult Syrian refugees was 35.4%. They also reported that their results were similar to a comparable study of a sample of Syrian refugees living in a tent city in Turkey (33.5%).

⁷ See: Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series, No. 57. Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (US). Rockville (MD): [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(US\)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207185/); 2014. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207185/>

Many within the policy and media world, tend to assume that most refugees have directly experienced violence. However, in discussions with colleagues in Lebanon who work on topics associated with forced migration, as well as individuals working in local and international organizations that help refugees, co-PI Ghosn learned that many refugees feel pressured/primed to say that they experienced violence directly for fear that they will not be considered “refugees” or qualify for medical/economic assistance. Therefore, we were very careful in our approach to not only not prime individuals, but to also give them control when answering these questions. In our sample, 45% of those surveyed revealed that they had been directly exposed to violence. This number is comparable to our Lebanese survey, where 44% of Lebanese who had lived through the Lebanese Civil War indicated that they experienced violence (Ghosn and Braithwaite 2019).

The principle of beneficence requires researchers “maximize possible benefits both to the study participants and to the wider group of individuals they represent,” which not only requires us to foresee and mitigate any adverse consequences, but also that we ensure our research is widely disseminated within and outside academic circles (Ellsberg and Heise 2002). We consider it of utmost importance that journalists, policymakers and researchers understand and respect the complex and painful decisions that individuals face when confronted with the need to leave their homes during armed conflict. This rule applies whether or not people experienced or witnessed violence directly. In fact, when our Syrian refugee participants were asked to indicate what affected their decision to leave their homes the top 3 reasons were economic hardship (95%), security threats (60%), and desire for family reunification (43%). Indeed, to serve the interests of and be to the benefit of the study participants, we have sought several opportunities to disseminate findings broadly. We have pursued to take advantage of opportunities arising from the relationship with project funders. We presented our work at the yearly Minerva meetings in DC attended by scholars, policy makers, as well as government officials. We also have produced several short policy briefs that are disseminated to agencies within the US government interested in our topic. We also looked for opportunities to disseminate our work to humanitarian organizations working in Lebanon on the Syrian refugee crises and in fact, were able to present our work at the “Global Academic Interdisciplinary Network on Research on the Objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees” hosted by UNHCR in Geneva in 2019 as well as the “Second International Research & Policy Workshop on Migration and Development” held by the German Development Institute in Bonn in 2018.

Fieldwork & Data Security

When interviewing vulnerable populations, researchers have a duty to ensure that they have put in place mechanisms that would ensure data quality, validity, and security. Therefore, the choice of the firm to carry out the survey (as mentioned above) and how the data would be handled—during the fieldwork as well as in the aftermath—were vital to ensuring data security.

An important element was to choose a firm that used tablets rather than paper surveys. Utilizing tablets ensured co-PI Ghosn had access to the data in real time. She was able to log in every day to confirm that enumerators were visiting the locations to which they were meant to be deployed and to confirm the quality of the data being collected. However, she requested that all geographical identifiers (i.e., the longitude and latitude of respondents’ locations) for each survey were removed before the full data was shared with the research teams. Given that the data collection was funded by the Minerva grant and officials of the U.S. Army Human Research Protections Office are permitted to inspect the records obtained to insure compliance with laws and regulations covering experiments

using human subjects, this was done to ensure that there were no identifying data that would allow anyone to pinpoint the answers to an individual or specific location, thereby protecting the anonymity of the participants. Also, once the data was downloaded by the research team in Arizona the data was erased from the firm's records and relevant passwords were changed.

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Appendix C: Syrian Survey Questions (Abridged)

Age: Can you tell me your Year of Birth?

- Gender: 1. Female 2. Male
- What is the name of the neighborhood/Area you live in in Lebanon?
- Governorate in Lebanon

Time in Syria and Decision to Flee

- What was your hometown in Syria?
- In what governorate (district) is your hometown?
- Thinking back to when you decided to leave Syria to Lebanon, can you please tell us on what date you departed your hometown? (Day, Month, Year). If you don't know the exact date, please give us an approximation.
- For how long in days (approximately) had you been discussing the possibility of leaving your home prior to actually doing so? (open ended)
- With whom did you discuss leaving your hometown? Check all that apply:
 1. Nobody
 2. Household
 3. Neighbors
 4. Family in Syria (not in household)
 5. Family abroad
 6. Friends in Syria
 7. Friends abroad
 8. Community leaders
 9. Authorities
 10. Other (please specify)
 11. Online Forums E.G. Facebook (please specify)
 12. Don't Know
 13. No Answer
- Who took the decision to leave?
 1. Self
 2. Other member of family
 3. Local Political Figure (e.g. Mayor, Councilor, Headman (*mukhtar*))
 4. Other
 5. Don't Know/No Answer
- In the twelve months prior to your departure from your hometown, did you individually experience any of the following acts? If yes, which ones? (Select all that apply)
 1. Physical assault / beaten
 2. Physical and mental torture
 3. Abduction
 4. Sexual violence
 5. Forced labor
 6. Wage theft
 7. Shot at
 8. Shelling

9. Other (please specify)
 10. None
 11. Don't Know
 12. No Answer
- In the twelve months prior to your departure from your hometown, did any family members in your household experience any of the following acts? If yes, which ones? (Select all that apply)
 1. Physical assault / beaten
 2. Physical and mental torture
 3. Abduction
 4. Sexual violence
 5. Forced labor
 6. Wage theft
 7. Shot at
 8. Shelling
 9. Other (please specify)
 10. None
 11. Don't Know
 12. No Answer
 - If you or your family member did not experience any of the acts of violence we just mentioned directly, were you aware of any of these acts?
 - If so, how proximate were you to such acts of violence?
 - The acts of violence were taking place in my town/village
 - The acts of violence were taking place in a nearby municipality
 - The acts of violence were taking place within the district
 - Don't Know/No Answer
 - At the time when you left your hometown, what proportion of people from your hometown had already left?
 - Almost none
 - Small
 - Half
 - Most
 - Don't Know/No Answer

Journey

- Focusing on your decision to travel to Lebanon, why did you choose Lebanon as your destination? (select all that apply)
 1. Geographic proximity
 2. Ease of border crossing
 3. Family
 4. Local community ties
 5. Economic opportunities
 6. Access to schools, hospitals and other services
 7. Felt more comfortable/ cultural affinity
 8. Welcoming attitude
 9. Other (please specify)

Current Situation in Lebanon

- What is your current living arrangement?
 - I rent
 - I am a homeowner
 - I live in a camp
 - Other (please specify)
 - Do not respond
- How many people live in the household?
- Do you have children? If yes, how many?
- Do you have close family (eg. Sibling, Aunt/Uncle, etc) that:
 1. Live with you? (Y/N)
 2. Live in your neighborhood? (Y/N)
 3. Live in Lebanon? (Y/N)
- What portion of the neighborhood (FEW BLOCKS AROUND HOUSE) in which you currently live, would you say is Syrian?
 - None
 - Very few
 - About half
 - Almost all
 - All
 - Don't know / no response
- Do you have any job that pays? (Y/N)
- If yes, how much do you earn a month in Lebanese Pounds?
- Are you registered with the United Nations? (Y/N)
- Do you currently receive financial support from the UN?
- Do you feel comfortable reporting crimes (Assault/Theft/Forced Labor) to the following Lebanese authorities?
 1. Municipality (Y/N)
 2. Police and security forces (Y/N)
 3. Lebanese Army (Y/N)
- In the past three months, has your situation in Lebanon gotten better, stayed the same, or worsened?
 1. Gotten better
 2. Stayed the same
 3. Worsened
 4. Don't know/ no response

Repatriation

- Do you have family members or relatives who are still in Syria?
- Do you feel pressured to leave Lebanon? (Y/N)

- I would now like to ask about your desire and ability to return to Syria. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: *I would **not** return to Syria under any circumstances.*
 1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Somewhat agree
 4. Neither agree nor disagree
 5. Somewhat disagree
 6. Disagree
 7. Strongly disagree
 8. Don't know / No response

DEMOGRAPHICS

- What is your marital status?
 1. Single
 2. Married
 3. Divorced/ Separated
 4. Widow
 5. No Response

How would you describe your religious denomination?

- Sunni
 - Alawi/Shia
 - Greek Orthodox
 - Catholic
 - Druze
 - Armenian
 - Other (please specify)
 - No response
- Which options below best describes your education status?
 1. Never went to school
 2. Primary school dropout
 3. Primary school
 4. Intermediate school dropout
 5. Intermediate school
 6. Secondary school dropout
 7. Secondary school
 8. Professional Training
 9. University dropout
 10. University
 11. Graduate degree

- Prior to 2011 Employment in Syria

1. Unemployed/looking for job
 2. Retired
 3. Small business owner
 4. Small farmer
 5. Full-time Worker
 6. Part-time worker
 7. Professional occupation (lawyer, engineer, full-time employee in bank, etc)
 8. Employed in service sector (taxi driver, waitress, salesperson etc)
 9. Has his/her own business
 10. Student
 11. House wife
 12. Sick, handicapped, disabled,
 13. Other_____ (please specify)
- Prior to 2011 your income (eg salary, rent, pension, money sent from family members abroad or in the country, business income, etc.) of all the family members, what is your average total monthly household income?
- Less than \$ 200
 - \$ 201 - \$ 500
 - \$ 501 - \$ 1000
 - \$ 1001 - \$ 1500
 - \$ 1501 - \$ 2000
 - \$ 2001 - \$ 3000
 - \$ 3001 - \$ 5000
 - More than \$ 5000

CONJOINT: REPATRIATION

I would like you to imagine a person, like yourself, but this person is considering a return to Syria. I would like you to consider the following two places in Syria, where there is currently **no** fighting taking place and tell me which place in Syria you think this person should go to.

- **Chance of harm on route there:** (1) Low (2) Moderate (3) High
- **Chance of peaceful situation lasting at least a year:** (1) Low (2) Moderate (3) High
- **Number of people you know living there:** (1) None (2) Some (3) Many
- **Ease of finding work:** (1) Easy, (2) Moderate, (3) Difficult

Now tell me, which place in Syria would you choose to return to?

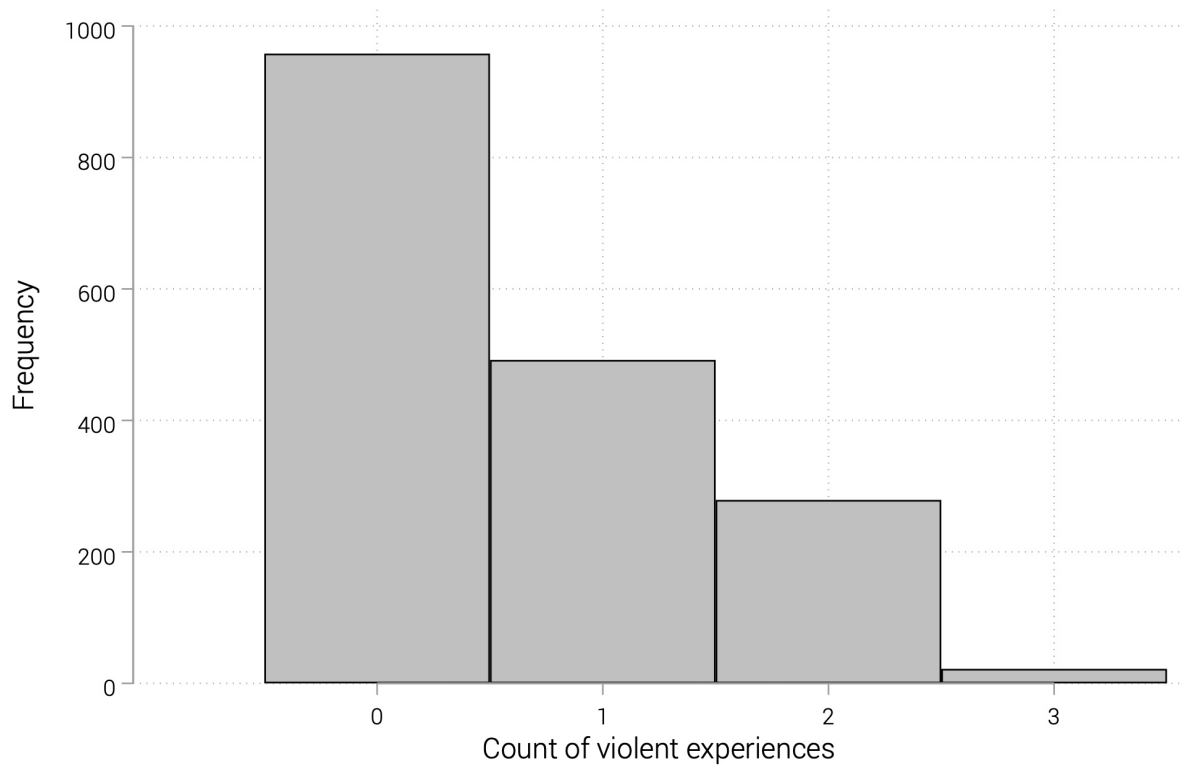
- Place A
- Place B
- Don't know / No response

Appendix D: Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Would not return (DV)	1453	4.429	2.103	1	7
Experienced Violence	1453	.46	.499	0	1
Displaced duration	1453	4.78	1.901	0	37
Proportion of Hometown that Fled	1453	1.321	.852	0	2
Syrian Neighborhood in LBN	1453	.484	.5	0	1
Easy border crossing	1453	.555	.497	0	1
Employed before war	1453	.514	.5	0	1
Discussed fleeing	1453	.861	.346	0	1
Close family in LBN	1453	.588	.492	0	1
Employed	1453	.206	.404	0	1
Situation in LBN is worse	1453	.227	.419	0	1
Registered with UN	1453	.645	.479	0	1
Living in Camp	1453	.306	.461	0	1
Comfortable reporting to police	1453	.408	.492	0	1
Household larger than 5	1453	.597	.491	0	1
Education	1453	.817	.855	0	3
Pre-war income	1453	.646	.74	0	2
Age	1453	35.284	12.36	18	90
Married	1453	.888	.316	0	1
Male	1453	.519	.5	0	1
Children	1453	.88	.326	0	1

Figure 1: Count of Violent Experiences (asked 9 total)



Cronbach's alpha test for violent experiences:

Number of items in scale: **8** (Each violence type (except forced labor, since N=0) – assault, torture, abduction, sexual violence, wage theft, shot at, shelling, other)

Average interitem covariance: **0.005**

Cronbach's alpha (scale reliability coefficient): **0.418**

Table 3: Cross-tabulations of Dependent Variable ('Would not return') over Independent Variables

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
No Violence	265	75	96	43	71	383	24
Violence	47	80	65	58	42	442	57
Few hometown fled	213	7	64	12	7	94	2
Half hometown fled	19	37	12	9	4	173	20
Most hometown fled	79	107	85	78	101	542	58
Non-Syrian Neighborhood	238	78	121	78	64	311	15
Syrian Neighborhood	72	77	440	22	49	513	66
Uneasy border crossing	72	64	29	13	29	480	41
Easy border crossing	240	90	132	88	83	345	40
No Discussion	10	15	9	10	13	152	15
Discussed	302	140	152	91	100	670	65
Unemployed before war	128	90	69	49	65	500	47
Employed before war	182	65	91	52	48	323	33
No family in LBN	174	60	89	36	35	264	32
Close family in LBN	134	95	70	65	78	560	49
Unemployed	252	134	125	81	104	650	60
Employed	60	21	35	20	9	172	20
Situation in LBN same	261	107	145	74	86	605	39
Situation in LBN worse	49	47	16	25	27	219	42
Unregistered w/ UN	164	56	48	32	36	245	20
Registered w/ UN	147	98	113	69	77	579	61
Not living in camp	230	110	122	82	77	546	58
Living in camp	82	45	39	18	36	279	23
Uncomfortable reporting	269	47	67	20	33	460	39
Comfortable reporting	42	105	92	74	80	359	42
Household smaller than 6	137	67	89	40	43	305	31
Household greater than 5	175	98	72	61	70	520	50

Appendix F: Gender and Violence

Gender and Violence in Syria

Women and men have different experiences with violence. The most obvious difference is disproportionate male mortality, which results in a shortage of working-age males and a large share of women and widow-headed households in the affected population (Buvinic et al. 2018). Obermeyer et al. (2008) have shown that males accounted for 81 percent of violent war deaths in 13 countries between 1955 to 2002. Analysis from the Violation Documentation Center (VDC), which recorded conflict-related violent deaths in Syria between March 18, 2011, to Dec 31, 2016, shows a clear pattern of excess male mortality. The VDC records 11,112 female adults killed (13.2% of total adults killed) and 5,671 female children killed (32.5% of total children killed) during this period (Guha-Sapir et al. 2018).

Sixteen percent of Syrian women heads of household in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon interviewed by the UNHCR reported that the absence of the former head of household was their main reason for leaving Syria (2014, p. 10). The excess mortality of men means women who previously depended on them for their financial contributions are left to care for their family alone. According to Schindler's (2010) study of female and male headed households in rural Rwanda, widow-headed households had a higher incidence of poverty and extreme poverty. Poverty may force women into the informal labour market and the war economy (Alsaba and Kapilashrami 2016). In doing so, they expose themselves to the vulnerabilities of informal labor.

Women and men also tend to experience different kinds of violence in war. According to the VDC, the violent deaths of civilian men in Syria were caused by shelling, shooting, executions, and aerial bombardments in approximately equal proportions. Civilian women and children were primarily by wide-area weapons of shelling and air bombardments, suggesting that their victimization is an indirect consequence of war. Women are usually more likely to suffer from gender-based and sexual violence although, in some cases, the incidence of sexual violence on males is also very high (Buvinic et al 2013). In Syria, government security and military forces have used violence against women as a tool of political repression (Euro-Mediterranean Rights Network 2013). For example, women are seen as valuable assets and are used to negotiate transfers through checkpoints and to obtain resources for their families in warring regions. In this process, women experience transactional sex and abductions. The sexual enslavement of women by ISIS is also well-known (Alsaba and Kapilashrami 2016). Women fighters are also actively recruited, particularly by Kurdish groups, the Syrian government and by the opposition. The Syrian Network for Human Rights (2015) reports abduction and forced recruitment in this process. Estimates of sexual and gender-based violence are often underreported, in peace and wartime, because victims are often afraid or ashamed to report these incidents (Nordas and Cohen 2011).

Our findings

In our survey sample of refugees, 51.89% are male (754) and 48.11% are female (699). These proportions are similar to official statistics: According to the UNHCR, the number of Syrian refugees registered in May 2015, when they stopped registering new refugees, was more than 1.2 million, of whom 52% were female and 48% were male, with more than half (54%) of the refugee population under the age of 18.

Table F.2.1 shows the number of males and females who have experienced at least one form of violence in our sample (as in our 'experienced violence' variable). We find that women are slightly more likely to have experienced violence.

Table F.1. Descriptive statistics on gender and experience with violence

	Female	Male	Total
Did not experience violence	320 (45.78%)	464 (61.54%)	784 (53.96%)
Experienced violence	379 (54.22%)	290 (38.46%)	669 (46.04%)
Total	699	754	1453

We asked respondents which acts of violence they experienced in the 12 months prior to their departure (select all that apply). Our ‘experienced violence’ variable was coded 1 if the individual had experienced at least one incident of violence. In Table F.2., we show the total number of incidents reported by type to examine the proportion of males and females who report having suffered each act of violence. We find that a majority of the individuals who report having experienced wage theft, shooting and shelling are females (72.2%, 63.9% and 61.6%, respectively). However, a majority of the individuals who report having experienced torture are males (76.3%). For all other types of violence, numbers are too low to draw concrete inferences.

Table F.2. Incidents of violence type by gender. Percentage of males/females reporting each incident in parenthesis.

	Female	Male	Total
Assault	4 (50%)	4 (50%)	8
Torture	18 (23.7%)	58 (76.3%)	76
Abduction	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4
Sexual Violence	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4
Forced labor	0	0	0
Wage theft	26 (72.2%)	10 (27.8%)	36
Shot at	179 (63.9%)	101 (36.1%)	280
Shelling	330 (61.6%)	206 (38.4%)	536
Other	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)	3
Total incidents	560	378	938

Note: Respondents may have experienced more than one act of violence. Therefore, total incidents is larger than the number of respondents who have experienced at least one form of violence, as shown in Table F.1.

Next, we conduct a series of analyses examining whether women’s experiences with violence lead to different perceptions or willingness to return to Syria. First, we examine whether there are differential effects of women and men with respect to violence and our outcome variable of “never return.” To do so, we include an interaction of these two variables in our ordinal logit model. The results, presented in Table F.3., show that the interaction term does not hold any statistical bearing on preferences for return between men and women and experiences of violence. As such, being a woman does not significantly condition the effects of violence on willingness to return.

Table F.3. Conditional Effects of Gender and Violence Experience

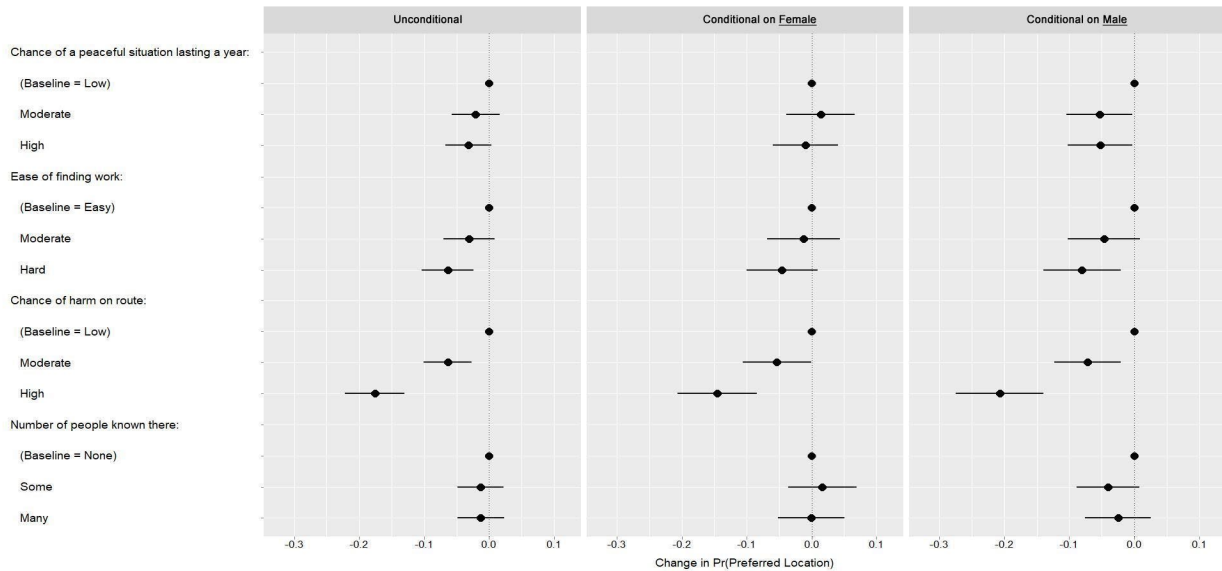
Experienced Violence	0.774*** (0.193)
Male	-0.403* (0.159)
Exp. Viol. X Male	-0.132 (0.226)
Displaced duration	0.0199 (0.0302)
Half hometown fled	1.233*** (0.237)
Most hometown fled	1.190*** (0.227)
Syrian Neighborhood in LBN	0.708*** (0.143)
Easy border crossing	-0.442** (0.151)
Employed before war	-0.0416 (0.136)
Discussed fleeing	-0.495** (0.175)
Close family in LBN	0.152 (0.119)
Employed	0.428** (0.139)
Situation in LBN is worse	0.316* (0.150)
Registered with UN	0.250* (0.127)
Living in camp	-0.203 (0.145)
Comfortable reporting crimes	-0.267† (0.140)
Household larger than 5	0.0817 (0.115)
Intermediate school dropout	-0.0276 (0.122)
Secondary school dropout	0.276 (0.169)
Secondary school & above	0.449† (0.260)
Pre-war income: \$201-\$500	0.209 (0.165)
Pre-war income: Greater than \$500	-0.0111 (0.200)
Age	0.00391 (0.00447)
Married	0.292 (0.196)
Children	-0.384† (0.197)
N	1,453

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, † p<0.1

We also examine the differential effects of gender on risk calculations using our conjoint experiment. As in the paper, we focus on the probability of violence on route to examine risk calculations upon

return. Our AMCEs compare ‘moderate chance of harm’ and ‘high chance of harm,’ respectively to a baseline of low harm. In Figure F.1, we display the unconditional results (as in the body of the paper) as well as results for male and female subsets. In all panels, we find that AMCEs are negative and significant, indicating that individuals – male or female – are less likely to select a return location with moderate or high chance of harm, compared to the baseline. Results for male and female subsets are very similar: As in the ordinal logit analyses, gender does not appear to significantly condition risk calculations.

Figure F.1. Conjoint Results Conditional on Gender



We do find other differences that are worth noting. Men are less likely to choose locations where peace is moderately or highly likely to last at least a year as compared to locations with a low chance. There are no significant effects for the female subsample on this variable. Males are also less likely to choose locations where it is hard to find work, relative to locations where it is easy. Once again, there are no significant effects for the female subsample on this variable.

References

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Guha-Sapir, Debarati, Benjamin Schlüter, Jose Manuel Rodriguez-Llanes, Louis Lillywhite, & Madelyn Hsia-Rei Hicks. 2018. “Patterns of civilian and child deaths due to war-related violence in Syria: a comparative analysis from the Violation Documentation Center dataset, 2011–16.” *The Lancet Global Health*, 6(1), e103–e110.

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Appendix G: Conjoint Experiment Balance Tests

We followed Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto (2013) and conducted balance checks by regressing respondent characteristics – including experience with violence -- on attribute levels. We report the p-value of the omnibus tests in the table below and find no evidence of imbalance (all $p > 0.05$).

Variable	Regression Type	Omnibus test statistic	p value
Age	Linear	0.75	0.65
Length of displacement	Linear	1.45	0.17
Close family in Lebanon	Logistic	11.78	0.16
Currently employed	Logistic	3.97	0.86
Did not finish intermediate school	Logistic	2.93	0.94
Did not finish primary school	Logistic	0.82	1.00
Experienced violence	Logistic	4.34	0.83
Gender	Logistic	6.03	0.64
Have children	Logistic	8.95	0.35
Live in camp	Logistic	6.81	0.56
Married	Logistic	2.94	0.94
Pre-war employed	Logistic	3.01	0.93
Pre-war personal income <\$200 per month	Logistic	6.38	0.60
Registered with UN	Logistic	8.21	0.41

NOTE: The omnibus test statistic relates to the F-test for linear regression and chi2 test for logistic regression.

Reference

Hainmueller, Jens, Daniel J. Hopkins, and Tepei Yamamoto. 2013. *Replication data for: Causal inference in conjoint analysis: Understanding multidimensional choices via stated preference experiments*. hdl:1902.1/22603. The Dataverse Network.

Appendix H: Additional Specifications Geographic Heterogeneity

Table 1: Alternative Specifications (with Syrian and Lebanese Governorates)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Experienced violence	1.196*** (0.110)	0.741*** (0.124)		0.692*** (0.132)
Half hometown fled		1.221*** (0.205)		1.289*** (0.241)
Most hometown fled		1.149*** (0.193)		1.191*** (0.228)
Discussed fleeing		-0.471** (0.171)		-0.463** (0.177)
Syria Neighborhood in LBN		0.820*** (0.135)		0.804*** (0.148)
Easy border crossing		-0.566*** (0.144)		-0.462** (0.152)
Employed before war		-0.062 (0.132)		-0.011 (0.139)
Close family in LBN			0.427*** (0.111)	0.172 (0.119)
Employed			0.455*** (0.132)	0.413** (0.141)
Situation in LBN is worse			0.824*** (0.137)	0.259† (0.151)
Registered with UN			0.489*** (0.122)	0.218† (0.129)
Living in camp			0.216 (0.147)	0.016 (0.165)
Comfortable reporting crimes			0.166 (0.118)	-0.261† (0.141)
Household larger than 5			0.316** (0.110)	0.104 (0.116)
Displaced duration	0.025 (0.032)	0.036 (0.033)	-0.023 (0.032)	0.023 (0.034)
Intermediate school dropout	0.150 (0.117)	-0.011 (0.122)	-0.146 (0.119)	0.015 (0.125)
Secondary school dropout	0.234 (0.157)	0.288† (0.166)	0.162 (0.162)	0.307† (0.172)
Secondary school & above	0.268 (0.249)	0.512* (0.257)	0.225 (0.251)	0.549* (0.261)
Pre-war income: \$201-500	1.204*** (0.122)	0.154 (0.158)	0.948*** (0.125)	0.152 (0.166)
Pre-war income: Greater than \$500	0.816*** (0.150)	-0.130 (0.193)	0.557*** (0.159)	-0.107 (0.202)
Age	0.000 (0.004)	0.004 (0.004)	-0.004 (0.004)	0.005 (0.005)
Married	0.272 (0.184)	0.269 (0.190)	0.299 (0.190)	0.288 (0.199)

Male	-0.890*** (0.108)	-0.361** (0.126)	-1.011*** (0.115)	-0.480*** (0.133)
Children	-0.411* (0.185)	-0.358† (0.193)	-0.387* (0.193)	-0.447* (0.203)
Syrian Governorates				
Damascus	0.616* (0.306)	0.637* (0.315)	0.589† (0.315)	0.735* (0.328)
Daraa	0.095 (0.260)	0.227 (0.269)	0.173 (0.261)	0.280 (0.275)
Deir ez-Zor	0.514† (0.303)	0.566† (0.315)	0.567† (0.309)	0.619† (0.324)
Hama	0.399* (0.187)	0.221 (0.198)	0.419* (0.195)	0.257 (0.205)
Al-Hasakah	-0.284 (0.284)	-0.198 (0.298)	-0.301 (0.285)	-0.237 (0.301)
Homs	0.396** (0.149)	0.305† (0.156)	0.373* (0.153)	0.278† (0.160)
Idlib	0.193 (0.210)	0.233 (0.219)	0.248 (0.211)	0.207 (0.224)
Raqqa	0.289† (0.172)	0.204 (0.181)	0.279 (0.175)	0.227 (0.186)
Rif Dimashq	-0.301 (0.634)	-0.735 (0.678)	-0.495 (0.640)	-0.873 (0.676)
Other	2.754** (0.905)	3.092** (0.942)	2.550** (0.915)	2.923** (0.958)
Lebanese Governorates				
Baalbek-El Hermel	0.013 (0.249)	0.395 (0.267)	-0.188 (0.255)	0.349 (0.278)
Beirut	0.653† (0.385)	1.268** (0.402)	0.564 (0.393)	1.212** (0.413)
Bekaa	0.116 (0.186)	-0.041 (0.196)	-0.109 (0.202)	-0.051 (0.213)
El Nabatieh	0.059 (0.328)	0.275 (0.346)	0.170 (0.344)	0.243 (0.359)
Mount Lebanon	0.500** (0.189)	0.621** (0.198)	0.383* (0.191)	0.611** (0.203)
North	-0.070 (0.197)	0.120 (0.205)	0.179 (0.202)	0.234 (0.212)
South	-0.444 (0.280)	-0.346 (0.297)	-0.507† (0.288)	-0.234 (0.306)
N	1516	1484	1476	1445

† p < 0:1, *p < 0:05, **p < 0:01, ***p < 0:001.